

Independent School District #861 – Winona Public Schools

2016 WAPS Facilities Task Force Charge Statement

September 1, 2016

Overview:

Winona Area Public Schools has initiated a process to gather community input as the School Board moves forward with a decision around WAPS facilities.

The role of the task force is to analyze and review information and data regarding WAPS facilities and their capacity for 21st century learning. The Task Force will submit a report to the School Board for consideration. The report will include an examination of deferred maintenance, capital projects, and the possibilities around renovating or replacing school buildings. All meetings will be facilitated by Wold Architects and Engineers.

Timeline:

- September 2016 to November 2016. Seven meetings occurring approximately every two weeks have been planned.

Background:

- The District has a history of studying and planning for its facility needs, including maintenance and energy improvement projects.
- The funding available for maintenance projects is highly inadequate to keep the buildings in good working order. State funding requires periodic public referendums in order to obtain funding for much needed maintenance as well as adapting facilities to the changing needs of educational programming.
- The last bond referendum for facilities was over 20 years ago and funded the construction of the middle school and other specified facility needs.
- Enrollment in the District has declined since 1995-96 to present from 4,641 students to 3,045 students in 2015-16 (based on K-12 data provided by the MN Department of Education). This represents a decline of 34% or 1,596 students less.
- Projected enrollment for the next five years is expected to decline to 2,739 students in the year 2020-21. This is more than a 44% decline in enrollment since the last building bond referendum.
- Public School funding is closely tied to enrollment. As the enrollment drops each year operating funds for the District decline.
- The District has needed to enacted regular budget cuts over the last 10 years.
- Of the 20 Minnesota school districts similar in size to Winona, the District maintains more square footage per student than any of the peer districts. This results in an additional financial burden that impedes the District's ability to deliver instruction.

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Core Beliefs

- The current financial state of the District is not sustainable.
- Facilities represent a rapidly growing financial burden on the District.
- The District is not able to provide many of the services necessary to meet the needs of the 21st century child. In order to address the needs of all learners a new prioritization of spending is required.
- A plan to address facilities must be part of the solution in providing improved education for our students.

Task Force Charge:

- Understand and quantify building capacity and programming for PreK-12.
- Study the Board selected "Option C: Three Elementary Buildings"
- Analyze the option in terms of capital costs, operating costs, educational benefit, and any other parameters the Task Force believes are relevant.
- Provide the Board with input on variations to the option guided by the findings of the group.
- Document the data for each variation, develop metrics to evaluate the variations, and provide pros and cons to each.
- Deliver a report to the School Board documenting the process, reasoning, and deliberations of the Task Force.
- Document and provide a report on the Task Force's preferred variation on Option C including the estimated capital cost of the projects.

Desired Product

- Provide a Long Range Facility plan based on Option C including new and renovated facilities and addressing long term facility maintenance needs.